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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 11 December 2013

[on the report of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) (A/68/423)]

68/75. International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 51/122 of 13 December 1996, 54/68 of 6 December 1999, 59/2 of 20 October 2004, 61/110 and 61/111 of 14 December 2006, 62/101 of 17 December 2007, 62/217 of 22 December 2007, 65/97 of 10 December 2010, 65/271 of 7 April 2011, 66/71 of 9 December 2011 and 67/113 of 18 December 2012,

Recognizing the extraordinary achievements made over the past 50 years in human space flight and space exploration for peaceful purposes, and noting the unique platform at the global level for international cooperation in space activities represented by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,

Deeply convinced of the common interest of all humankind in promoting and expanding the exploration and use of outer space, as the province of all humankind, for peaceful purposes and in continuing efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived therefrom, and also of the importance of international cooperation in this field, for which the United Nations should continue to provide a focal point,

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation in developing the rule of law, including the relevant norms of space law and their important role in international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, and of the widest possible adherence to international treaties that promote the peaceful uses of outer space in order to meet emerging new challenges, especially for developing countries,

Seriously concerned about the possibility of an arms race in outer space, and bearing in mind the importance of article IV of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies,[1]

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 610, No. 8843.

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Recognizing that all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, should contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Deeply concerned about the fragility of the space environment and the challenges to the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, in particular the impact of space debris which is an issue of concern to all nations,

Noting the progress achieved in the further development of peaceful space exploration and applications as well as in various national and cooperative space projects, which contributes to international cooperation, and the importance of further developing the legal framework to strengthen international cooperation in this field,

Convinced of the need to promote the use of space technology towards implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration[2] and contributing to the post-2015 development agenda process,

Seriously concerned about the devastating impact of disasters,[3]

Desirous of enhancing international coordination and cooperation at the global level in disaster management and emergency response through greater access to and use of space-based services for all countries and facilitating capacity-building and institutional strengthening for disaster management, in particular in developing countries,

Deeply convinced that the use of space science and technology and their applications and geospatial information in areas such as tele-health, tele-education, disaster management, environmental protection and other Earth observation applications contribute to achieving the objectives of the global conferences of the United Nations that address various aspects of economic, social and cultural development, particularly poverty eradication,

Welcoming, in that regard, the fact that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, recognized the important role that space science and technology play in promoting sustainable development,[4]

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its fifty-sixth session,[5]

1. *Endorses* the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the work of its fifty-sixth session;[5]

2. *Agrees* that the Committee, at its fifty-seventh session, should consider the substantive items recommended at its fifty-sixth session,[6] taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries;

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[2] Resolution 55/2.

[3] The term "disasters" refers to natural or technological disasters.

[4] Resolution 66/288, annex, para. 274.

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/68/20).

[6] Ibid., para. 352.

3. *Notes* that, at its fifty-second session, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee continued its work,[7] as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/113;

4. *Agrees* that the Legal Subcommittee, at its fifty-third session, should consider the substantive items and reconvene the working groups recommended by the Committee,[8] taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries;

5. *Urges* States that have not yet become parties to the international treaties governing the uses of outer space[9] to give consideration to ratifying or acceding to those treaties in accordance with their national law, as well as incorporating them into their national legislation;

6. *Notes* that, at its fiftieth session, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee continued its work,[10] as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/113;

7. *Agrees* that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its fifty-first session, should consider the substantive items and reconvene the working groups recommended by the Committee,[11] taking into account the concerns of all countries, in particular those of developing countries;

8. *Welcomes with satisfaction* the recommendations for an international response to the near-Earth object impact threat, endorsed by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its fiftieth session and by the Committee at its fifty-sixth session;[12]

9. *Notes with appreciation* that some States are already implementing space debris mitigation measures on a voluntary basis, through national mechanisms and consistent with the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee and with the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,[13] endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/217;

10. *Invites* other States to implement, through relevant national mechanisms, the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

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[7] Ibid., chap. II.C; and A/AC.105/1045.

[8] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/68/20), paras. 251–255.

[9] Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 610, No. 8843); Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 672, No. 9574); Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 961, No. 13810); Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1023, No. 15020); and Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1363, No. 23002).

[10] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/68/20), chap. II.B; and A/AC.105/1038.

[11] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/68/20), paras. 181–183.

[12] Ibid., para. 144; and A/AC.105/1038, para. 198, and annex III.

[13] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/62/20), annex.

11. *Considers* that it is essential that States pay more attention to the problem of collisions of space objects, including those with nuclear power sources, with space debris, and other aspects of space debris, calls for the continuation of national research on this question, for the development of improved technology for the monitoring of space debris and for the compilation and dissemination of data on space debris, also considers that, to the extent possible, information thereon should be provided to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and agrees that international cooperation is needed to expand appropriate and affordable strategies to minimize the impact of space debris on future space missions;

12. *Urges* all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space as an essential condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

13. *Endorses* the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for 2014, as proposed to the Committee by the Expert on Space Applications and endorsed by the Committee;[14]

14. *Urges* all Member States to continue to contribute to the Trust Fund in Support of the United Nations Programme on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in order to enhance the capacity of the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat to provide technical and legal advisory services in its priority thematic areas;

15. *Notes with satisfaction* the progress made within the framework of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), and encourages Member States, on a voluntary basis, to provide the programme with the additional resources necessary to ensure that greater support may be provided to Member States by UN-SPIDER and its regional support offices;

16. *Also notes with satisfaction* the continuous progress made by the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems towards achieving compatibility and interoperability among global and regional space-based positioning, navigation and timing systems and in the promotion of the use of global navigation satellite systems and their integration into national infrastructure, particularly in developing countries, and notes with appreciation that the International Committee held its eighth meeting in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 10 to 14 November 2013;

17. *Notes with appreciation* that the regional centres for space science and technology education, affiliated to the United Nations, namely, the African regional centres for space science and technology education in the French and English languages, located in Morocco and Nigeria, respectively, the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, located in India, the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for Latin America and the Caribbean, with campuses located in Brazil and Mexico, and the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for Western Asia, located in Jordan, have continued their education programmes in 2013, encourages the regional centres to continue to promote greater participation of women in their education programmes, and agrees that the regional centres should continue to report to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on their activities;

[14] Ibid., *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/68/20), para. 66; and A/AC.105/1031.

18. *Notes with satisfaction* the progress on the establishment of a new regional centre for space science and technology education in Asia and the Pacific located at Beihang University in Beijing, as proposed by the Government of China, in particular the positive conclusion of an evaluation mission to Beihang University facilitated by the Office for Outer Space Affairs in September 2013;

19. *Emphasizes* that regional and interregional cooperation in the field of space activities is essential to strengthen the peaceful uses of outer space, assist States in the development of their space capabilities and contribute to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[2] to that end requests relevant regional organizations to offer the assistance necessary so that countries can carry out the recommendations of regional conferences, and in that regard notes the importance of the equal participation of women in all fields of science and technology;

20. *Recognizes*, in that regard, the important role played by conferences and other mechanisms in strengthening regional and international cooperation among States, such as the African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization and the Space Conference of the Americas;

21. *Requests* the Committee to continue to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, and agrees that during its consideration of the matter the Committee could continue to consider ways to promote regional and interregional cooperation and the role that space technology could play in the implementation of recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development;

22. *Emphasizes* the need to increase the benefits of space technology and its applications and to contribute to an orderly growth of space activities favourable to sustained economic growth and sustainable development in all countries, including building resilience to reduce the consequences of disasters, in particular in developing countries;

23. *Reiterates* that the benefits of space technology and its applications should continue to be brought to the attention, in particular, of the major United Nations conferences and summits for economic, social and cultural development and related fields and that the use of space technology should be promoted in efforts towards achieving the objectives of those conferences and summits, including implementing the Millennium Declaration and contributing to the post-2015 development agenda process;

24. *Welcomes* the increased efforts to strengthen further the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, and recommends that the abbreviation "UN-Space" be used to refer to the Inter-Agency Meeting to increase its visibility and to further strengthen the role of that inter-agency mechanism, as agreed by the Committee;[15]

25. *Urges* entities of the United Nations system, particularly those participating in the Inter-Agency Meeting, to continue to examine, in cooperation with the Committee, how space science and technology and their applications could

[15] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/68/20), para. 317.

contribute to implementing the Millennium Declaration and to the post-2015 development agenda process;

26. *Requests* the entities of the United Nations system, other international organizations and the Secretary-General to continue and, where appropriate, to enhance their cooperation with the Committee and to provide it with reports on the issues dealt with in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies;

27. *Endorses* the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subcommittees for the period 2014–2015, and reiterates that the Committee and its subcommittees, at their respective sessions in 2014, should elect their officers nominated for that period;[16]

28. *Decides* that Belarus and Ghana shall become members of the Committee;[17]

29. *Endorses* the decision of the Committee to grant permanent observer status to the Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology;[18]

30. *Encourages* the regional groups to promote participation in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies by the States members of the Committee that are also members of the respective regional groups.

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[16] Resolution 67/113, paras. 27–29; and *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/68/20), paras. 336–339.

[17] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20* (A/68/20), paras. 340 and 341.

[18] Ibid., para. 344.